

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Thursday, September 1, 2016  
Mansfield Town Hall  
Town Council Chambers**

**4:00 PM**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

Present: Steve Bacon, Tom Callahan, Matt Hart, George Jones, June Krisch, Bonnie Kumiega, Paul McCarthy, Toni Moran, Shamim Patwa, Diana Pelletier, Anthony Raggi, Joy Sgobbo, Paul Shapiro, and Steve Smith

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm

Guest: Francine Christiansen with Christiansen Consulting

**1. Call to Order**

President Steve Bacon called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

Mr. Bacon welcomed new Board member Joy Sgobbo.

**2. Opportunity for Public to Comment**

There was no public comment.

**3. Approval of Minutes of August 4, 2016**

Diana Pelletier made a motion to approve the minutes of August 4, 2016. George Jones seconded the motion. The motion was approved with one abstention from Ms. Sgobbo.

**4. Executive Director Report**

Cynthia van Zelm asked for one additional Board member to volunteer to staff the Partnership table at the Festival.

Ms. van Zelm said at the suggestion of the Partnership, the Town, and the LeylandAlliance team, LAZ Parking has been asked to issue parking warnings until mid-September as people adjust to the parking changes and the influx of students.

Matt Hart said the goal is to strike a balance with the need to enforce to keep cars moving in and out, and to be as user friendly as possible.

Mr. Hart said there continue to be several issues with people parking in the Storrs Commons lot and not utilizing those businesses, leaving limited spaces for Storrs Commons patrons. Storrs Commons has hired LAZ to help it with enforcement.

June Krisch asked about setting time limits for when parking is enforced, i.e., stopping at 6 pm, as other towns do. Mr. Hart said the team had discussed this but since there are over 600 residences downtown, the fear is that those residents would take those spots in the evening and overnight, limiting spots for visitors.

Mr. Hart said the long term solution may be to go to a pay on foot meter system. It would be much more straightforward than marking cars ticketing system.

## **5. State of Connecticut Nondiscrimination Certification Affidavit**

Toni Moran made a motion to approve an affidavit that reads as follows: That the policies of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership comply with the nondiscrimination agreements and warranties of Connecticut General Statutes Section 4a-60 (a) (1) and Section 4a-60a (a) (1), as amended. Diana Pelletier, Partnership Secretary, is authorized to sign said affidavit. Ms. Krisch seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

## **6. Approval of Mansfield Downtown Partnership Three-Year Strategic Plan**

Francine Christiansen referred to a Power Point presentation and an accompanying handout.

She reviewed the difference between “positioning” and “promotion” in terms of the goal of positioning the Partnership as an organization and the downtown as one of the goals in the Strategic Plan. She said with respect to positioning, the goal is to think about how the Partnership and the downtown fit into the competitive landscape. She said the Strategic Plan includes a positioning statement but a consultant can help further define the best way to position the Partnership and the downtown.

Mr. Jones said it will be important to identify the audiences for the Partnership and the downtown.

Ms. Christiansen then reviewed the key roles for the Partnership. She said the Partnership has been serving as an ombudsman ever since Storrs Center opened but the Strategic Plan institutionalizes that concept.

She said fee for service is also part of the plan if the service being requested meets the Partnership’s mission.

Paul Shapiro said the service and who pays the fee has to be clearly defined.

He said there will need to be further discussion about the Partnership working in another area of town particularly in terms of how it affects the downtown and what role UConn would have, if any, since it is heavily represented on the Partnership Board.

Ms. Christiansen noted that the Partnership's mission does give it some latitude to assist in other areas, if requested. She said the Finance and Growth Committee would be consulted initially to see if the Partnership would want to undertake a particular task. It would be a case by case basis and the Board would have to approve moving ahead. She has a template that she has shared with Ms. van Zelm that could be used for an evaluation.

Mr. Hart said he would suggest reviewing whether leveraging the strength of the Partnership organization to assist with economic development would be a benefit to all entities, instead of potentially creating a new entity. He acknowledged that the Partnership may need additional resources to do this hence the fee for service.

Ms. Christiansen said some key questions to ask before taking on a fee for service project is 1) does it enhance the mission? 2) is it sustainable? 3) is it too risky?

Ms. Christiansen reviewed the brand statement. Ms. Moran suggested that the word "so" in the brand statement be changed to "in which." Ms. van Zelm will make that change.

Ms. Christiansen said she developed a simple implementation plan. Each priority has its own implementation plan. She referred to a dashboard that the Board can use at every meeting to determine how it is monitoring progress on implementing the Strategic Plan.

Ms. Christiansen then handed out draft tool message cards that the Board and staff can use to easily talk about the Partnership and how it will support the downtown. She said it is important to be an ambassador.

Tom Callahan said the Finance and Administration Committee has been discussing the future of the Partnership for some time. He is pleased with the results of the strategic planning process and recognized Ms. Christiansen for her good work.

Mr. Hart made a motion to approve the Mansfield Downtown Partnership's Three-Year Strategic Plan. Mr. Jones seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

## **7. Report from Governance Task Force/Discussion**

Mr. Bacon said he, Betsy Paterson, Ms. Christiansen, and Ms. van Zelm began working on recommendations for the structure of the Partnership. They are recommending that the number of Board members be reduced to 13 to 15 Board members – up to three recommended by the President of UConn; up to three appointed by the Town Council; up to

eight directors elected by the Partnership membership at least two of which should be from the Downtown Storrs community; and one enrolled UConn student.

There are also currently three members on the Board from the Mansfield Business and Professional Association (MBPA) with MBPA Chair Bonnie Kumiega serving as ex-officio on the Board. The goal would be to have a greater number of elected positions including those from the Storrs Center business community. The proposal would be to eliminate the representation from the MBPA.

No Board members would leave the Board to arrive at the 13 to 15 Board members but by attrition and not filling positions, the Board would be able to arrive at the requisite number of Board members.

Mr. Bacon said fewer Board members will also help with a quorum which has been difficult at times.

Another goal is to develop a process to evaluate what skills are needed in a Board member and match them accordingly.

Mr. Bacon said the process will be for the Governance Task Force to make comprehensive changes to the Partnership's Bylaws and to present them to the Board for approval and then the Partnership membership for ratification.

Mr. Shapiro said he believes the recommended changes in structure make sense given the Partnership is in a very different place in 2016 than it was in 2001.

Ms. Christiansen said the trend with bylaws is to establish task forces vs. permanent committees. This allows board to establish task forces or committees without requiring a change to the bylaws.

## **8. Report from Committees**

### Advertising and Promotion

Ms. Moran said the Committee has not met since the discussion of a positioning task force by the Strategic Planning Committee and Board began. Ms. Moran and Mr. Jones, who will co-chair the positioning task force with Ms. Moran, did meet to decide who to invite to serve on the task force.

### Finance and Administration

Interim Chair Matt Hart pointed to the September 30, 2016 financials that were reviewed by the Committee last week. The Town maintains several funds that are related to Storrs Center and he referred to Town Finance Director Cherie Trahan's memo to him and Ms. van Zelm.

Mr. Hart said the events in the Fund 270 Program have a positive balance (movies, Winter Welcome, Festival, Bike Tour, and Summer Concert Series).

Mr. Hart said there is \$17,000 in the Town Square account to be used for future expenses in the Town Square.

He said the anticipated over-run in Storrs Center infrastructure (mainly the roads and the parking garage) has been decreased from an expected \$1.4 to \$1.6 million to \$767,599. He said this will be paid back over time by the Town with Storrs Center revenues.

Mr. Hart said year-end revenues over expenses for the Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center were \$6,500.

Mr. Hart noted that the parking garage has been in the black since its first year.

Mr. Bacon asked if someone is keeping track of parking garage counts. Ms. van Zelm said LAZ does garage counts twice a day and will now be providing it to the parking team on a monthly basis.

Steve Smith asked if the revenue presented for parking represents all the revenue i.e., tickets on the roads and lots, or just that for the parking garage. Mr. Hart will verify for the next Board meeting.

Ms. van Zelm said a growth task force will begin to look at a Memorandum of Understanding between the Partnership, Town, and UConn on duties and financing commitments for the Partnership.

### Membership Development

Chair George Jones said the Committee met on August 15 and reviewed final membership counts and the status of the Strategic Plan.

### Planning and Design

Mr. Bacon said the Committee will consider the Public Spaces Plan in September and hope to make a recommendation to the Board at its October meeting.

## **9. Adjourn**

Ms. Moran made a motion to adjourn. Bonnie Kumiega seconded the motion. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 5:20 pm.

*Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.*